

The Examiner.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND NEWS.

EDWARD WHELAN]

This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

[EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

Vol. VII.

CHARLOTTETOWN, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, MONDAY, JUNE 14, 1858.

No. 50.

Colonial Legislature.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, March 18, 1858.

FORENOON SESSION.

There was a call of the House, at which Hon. Mr. Palmer and Mr. Douse were absent.

Hon. Col. Secretary presented to the House the Blue Book for 1857.

The petition of the inhabitants of Princetown and Royalty, and vicinity, asking a grant in aid of an Agricultural Society, which has been established there, with a cash capital on hand of £40, was taken up by the House.

Hon. Mr. MONTGOMERY.—Mr. Speaker, I take the petition to be a correct one, and well worthy the attention of the House. It sets forth the revival of a society which was formed in Princetown a number of years ago, but which was broken up at the time the Branch of the Royal Agricultural Society was established at St. Eleanor's, with which it was amalgamated. There is at present £40 subscribed towards it, and the petition now taken up asks for a sum to enable it to a certain extent to become a useful institution. I think the House formerly gave a grant to it, before the establishment of the Royal Agricultural Society, and will not, I hope, refuse something now. I move it be referred to the House in committee of the whole on supply.

Hon. COLONIAL TREASURER.—Mr. Speaker, the most proper course, I think, to adopt with reference to the petition would be to refer it to the Royal Agricultural Society. No doubt they would give it a proper consideration.

Hon. T. H. HAVILAND.—It is understood, I believe, that the Society at Princetown is not a branch, but an independent society, and, therefore, not under the control of the Royal Agricultural Society. Consequently, the propriety of so referring it, would be questionable. But if the House were disposed to give a small grant, I am of opinion it would not be badly applied.

Mr. CLARK.—The society, of which the one alluded to is a revival, was the oldest institution of the kind in the Island, and was the means of doing a great deal of good to the farmers in that vicinity, and, I believe, for a number of years received grants from the Assembly. But when the Branch Society for Prince County was established at St. Eleanor's, the Princetown Society transferred its funds to the former, which after a fair trial has proved a failure. Now, sir, my opinion is that if a small grant be given to the Princetown Society it would be well bestowed, and more good would result therefrom, than there has from the Branch Royal Agricultural Society. Such a course would not entail much expense upon the country generally, and would be a great benefit to the farmers of Prince County. As to referring the petition to the Royal Agricultural Society, I do not think such a course is called for, it being entirely independent of that body. I will, therefore, vote for its going into supply.

Mr. MACINTOSH.—I am opposed to every grant to Branch Societies. Experience shows that such appropriations are not productive of the good results hon. members anticipate. Besides, in justice to the Royal Agricultural Society, we could not make such a grant as is asked for by the petitioners. It has been said that the old Society of Princetown was broken up on account of the establishment of the Branch Society at St. Eleanor's; this might be so, but I do not think it amalgamated with the latter. However, if the people of Princetown and vicinity are so anxious to have a society of their own, I think there is not a farmer who would be against giving his proportionate share towards it.

Mr. COOPER.—It is all very well to encourage agriculture in a legitimate way, but I do not approve of giving one portion of the people for the benefit of another. Besides, the benefits arising from such Societies are not so general as is supposed, the concern at last generally falls into the hands of a few persons. I am entirely opposed to the prayer of the petition. Yet, if it be so much desired let it be supported by voluntary subscription, and I do not think there is any farmer likely to derive benefit from it who would be against giving five or ten shillings for its support. But I do object to taxing one portion of the community for the benefit of another.

Hon. Mr. MONTGOMERY.—Agriculture should be encouraged by the state here as in other countries. In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Canada, large grants are annually given towards that most important branch of industry. But to say that a Society, for the purpose of fostering and encouraging agriculture, wherever started, and however narrow the sphere of its influence, is not a benefit to the country at large, is a great mistake. Is it not a benefit to the country, that a poor man, unable to obtain seed for his land, can be accommodated and helped, by a combination of his richer neighbors who form themselves into a Society for the purpose of helping him? It is argued, though, that there have been losses arising out of the establishment of such institutions; but, sir, what of that? Is it not so in all trades? But, the loss in this case, however contradictory it may appear, turns out a positive gain. Look, for instance at the cost of importing stock for the Royal Agricultural Society compared with what it realizes when sold in this Island. According to such an idea the country would soon be ruined; but look at the immense benefits derived by the community from such importations, and it will be evident to the most skeptical that such losses are ultimately a benefit. And, considering that this House has heretofore been so liberal in its appropriations towards the encouragement of Agriculture, I think it will not object to the prayer of the petition now before it. At least we ought to give so much in proportion to the money on hand, as in the instance of the Royal Agricultural Society—to which so much is given by the House for every pound subscribed.

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN.—From statements in the report of the Royal Agricultural Society, it would appear that in the Branch Society at St. Eleanor's there is a great deficiency. Again, we have a statement setting forth the deficiency of the branch in Georgetown of £55. In fact these branches have all worked so badly that it has discouraged me from giving any more towards similar institutions, and in the hope of seeing any good results from such societies hereafter to be established. There was an Agricultural Society got up in Three Rivers, by private contribution, but it did not flourish; it soon fell through. And from what we see of the results of all attempts at establishing Agricultural Societies, independent of the central one, we should not be very sanguine as the results of anything of the kind. I am opposed to the petition.

Mr. CLARK.—There is one circumstance in favor of a grant to the Princetown Society, and that is, it is the only

one in the Island that has been a loss to Royal Agricultural Society. (Cries of "No!" "No!" by Hon. Mr. Mooney.) I wonder if the hon. member from the Monaghan Settlement ever lost anything. The hon. member for King's County, Mr. Cooper, made some allusions about the Society's being only a benefit to the few persons, who had the immediate control of it. Now, sir, the reverse is the fact. The late Secretary (Mr. McNutt), who is now dead and gone, instead of benefitting by it, actually lost money by it. I would still say that the petitioners deserve a grant, and money might be worse applied than in giving them a small appropriation.

Hon. Mr. MOONEY.—I am surprised, sir, that the hon. members from Prince County are incessantly asking for money. I think, as I have often stated before, that the only alternative left this House is to grant them a separate Legislature. The hon. member (Mr. Clark) made use of a scurrilous allusion about the Monaghan settlement. But, sir, perhaps if I had the hon. member in a cage, to exhibit him among the Monaghans at two-pence a head, they might flock in large numbers to see such a natural curiosity. Hon. members are very fond of making a display of their advocacy of Agriculture; but, sir, in the present instance, if the venerable fathers of Princetown—

Mr. CLARK.—The hon. member is mistaken. I did not ridicule the Monaghans or any other class of people. And, as for his exhibiting me, I think the exhibition of himself would be a more profitable speculation. The hon. member interrupted me.

Hon. Mr. MOONEY.—I did not, I believe, bring him off the track of his discourse; but, as yesterday was Paddy's day, perhaps there were many persons off the track, who, like the man coming off the sea, imagines he must still use his "sex legs," but they need not blame others if they can't go straight. Grants! grants! grants! is the cry from all parts of the country! And what has been the result? Look at the Model Farm; look at the Branch Societies! where are they now? If hon. members are not contented with having the petition referred to the fountain-head—the Royal Agricultural Society—they have no right to expect a grant from this House. I will never give my voice for any grant in aid of agriculture except to the Royal Agricultural Society.

Mr. YEO.—I think the petition deserves consideration. Princetown and the Districts adjoining are good for the pursuit of Agriculture, and if some encouragement is not given the farmer he will not flourish as he ought. In Cascumpee, since a branch of the Royal Agricultural Society, what with improved implements, &c., the people farm very different from what they did some years ago; and since the shipbuilding has failed, the only resource we have to fall back upon is Agriculture, and it ought to be encouraged.

Mr. LAIRD.—I am opposed to a grant of money to the Princetown Society or any other Society of the kind, no matter where established. I might, in some cases, go for a small grant; but I think the Princetown Society is quite safe if it has £40, which would be enough to purchase seed. Societies of this kind should be self-supporting. I will, therefore, go for nothing but enough for to purchase seed, if it be required.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY.—I believe the farmers of Princetown and vicinity deserve as much consideration at our hands as those of other parts; but I am afraid if we give a grant to the present petitioners, we will have petitions from all other parts of the Island, praying for a similar appropriation. But why not apply to the Royal Agricultural Society? Any Agricultural Society applying to the Central Body, stating the amount of funds in their possession, will receive agricultural implements, &c., in proportion to their capital. Now, sir, if we give grants to all who may petition us, instead of the Central Society, we shall do away with the cheapness in importing seeds, &c.; because the larger the importation the greater the chance for obtaining articles at a lower rate. Now, with reference to the former Society at Princetown, when a Branch of the Royal Agricultural Society was formed, it was removed to St. Eleanor's, with their consent. But it is well known that the Branch fell through, owing partly to inefficient management, and partly to other causes. The seeds were put in an unsafe building, and being exposed to the weather, were partially spoiled. It was stated that they were damaged before being sent; but this was not the case. On this account, however, they refused to pay for them, and there is now about £200 due the Society. It was consequently broken up. If the petitioners thought it an advantage to have a Depot in Princetown, instead of St. Eleanor's, and a good guarantee were given to the Royal Agricultural Society, I do not think the latter would object to such a course. The Central Society do not wish to have the money down for every article given, but only a certificate that such stock has been delivered. In conclusion, if we give grants to such Societies, it would hurt the Royal Agricultural Society.

Hon. Mr. MONTGOMERY.—I would have it understood that the Society in Princetown takes in a large portion of Queen's as well as Prince County, and therefore is of as much importance as a Branch Society; but if, as suggested by the Hon. Col. Secretary, a Branch were established in Princetown, it would, I am convinced, do much good. But, sir, I understand it has been implied that the Royal Agricultural Society would not establish a Branch Society there.

Mr. H. HAVILAND.—I agree with the Hon. Colonial Secretary that it would be bad policy to fritter away, on all small Societies that may start up from time to time, the money that ought to be given to the Central Society. If the money, instead of being so wasted, were given to the parent Society, it would be enabled to import cheaper, because it could import more largely. I am surprised at the hon. member, Mr. Cooper, and other hon. members, for the view they take of the importance, or rather unimportance, of fostering agriculture. They are behind the age, notwithstanding the experience they should have had in these matters. Why, sir, agriculture is particularly fostered by all species of governments, from the despotic power of Russia to the Republican States of America. In France and other European nations, they have ministers of agriculture, and so have they in the United States, the President of which latter country, in his message, recognised the necessity of fostering this most important branch of human industry. Besides, in all the Colonies, and in fact, in all farming countries, the necessity of encouraging agricultural pursuits is fully recognized. Allusion has been made to the Model Farm by some hon. members who opposed its continuance. I have spoken my opinion upon this subject before; but, now that it is among the things that have been, I will say that the Legislature will yet live to regret the action they have taken in breaking it up. It has been hinted that the stock went very low, and that the country would lose a great deal by it; but I think it a mistake, for I saw a year old calf bring ten pounds, a boar pig brought , and other things in proportion. Now, sir, this shows that if the farm had been managed

economically, it would in time be a great benefit to P. E. Island; and if sales were held annually, so that persons desirous of improving their breeds of stock would have an opportunity of purchasing, then we should not have such narrow-minded men, blind to their own and the public interest, to deal with. By the way, at the sale, I saw a man from the back woods, in Mr. Mooney's district, give £11 or £12 for a heifer a year old. This shows that people are beginning to appreciate the advantages of having improved breeds of stock.

Hon. Mr. MOONEY.—I am surprised—(but the hon. member was interrupted by cries of "Spoken!" "Spoken!") Sir, if I am allowed, I will move a resolution, and it is, that the prayer of the petition be rejected. And while I make the motion, I would say that I am not one who has ever sought to retard the progress of agriculture. But, sir, I cannot see the utility of chartering a ship and sending a man to England to purchase an animal at £60, which, when sold here, only realizes £27 10s. This is what I call going ahead like a certain fish called crab-fish, which goes backwards all the while. Why, sir, instead of the Royal Agricultural Society being such a blessing to the country, as hon. members would have us believe, it is an institution that has been bordering on a curse to the country. We may have long speeches and harangues going to show the great benefits of this Society to the country generally; but, sir, after all they can say, it only benefits the people around Charlottetown, and thus, like Sinbad the Sailor, when he came back to Bagdad, it comes back to the place from whence it came.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY.—A man might travel through England or North America, and he would not find a better show of stock than was exhibited yesterday at the Model Farm; and I, for one, am sorry that this institution has been given up. I was gratified to see so many good farmers attending the sale as purchasers, which shows that they are fully alive to the importance of improvement of stock. Why, sir, notwithstanding the assertion, that we will lose by importing stock at a heavy cost and sell them cheap, if hon. members knew at what a rate breeding stock is let out in England, they would change their minds. A good bull for the season brings £100 sterling, and rams, &c., in proportion. Sir, the mere fact of the great improvement in the breed of stock in this Island shows that, if we lost all that it cost, we would still be gainers by the transaction.

[At this stage, Hon. Mr. Palmer came into the House, and took his seat. This proceeding being opposed to the standing rule, he being absent at the Call of the House, the hon. member was informed by the Speaker that he should have to vacate his seat, which he did.]

Mr. COOPER.—I do not deny but that, in a new country, the importation of stock is necessary; but when we come to consider that, so far as regards good stock, this Island is not so badly off as would be supposed, and therefore the paying of such high prices for stock imported may be objectionable to many. But the reason why Societies, got up for the advancement of agriculture, are not supported by subscription is their getting into the hands of persons the farmers have no confidence in, and therefore it is little wonder they become disgusted and will not subscribe.

Hon. Mr. LONGWORTH.—I disagree with the last remark made by the hon. member, Mr. Cooper. The people are not disgusted, so far as I know, with the persons into whose hands the management of the affairs of such Societies are entrusted. The present instance, where the people of Princetown have subscribed £40, is a direct contradiction of such an assertion. But it is true that by applying to the Royal Agricultural Society, they could obtain an equal amount of seeds, implements, &c., to the capital already subscribed. I am in favour of giving them a small grant, however, and will vote for the petition going into supply.

Hon. Mr. MONTGOMERY.—While I am in favor of a grant to the Princetown Society, I give my word that I would do nothing that would be in any way prejudicial to the Royal Agricultural Society; on the contrary, I have always been, and will continue to be, a warm supporter of that valuable institution. While attending the sale at the Model Farm, I was very much pleased with the superior quality of the stock thereon, and with the number of eager purchasers there from all parts of the country; and I maintain, sir, that if it at present appear a great loss to the country, such loss will not be felt, but will ultimately be a real benefit to the country. And when the House gave the grants towards the establishment of that farm, I voted for them with the full conviction that it would not realize as much as it cost, but also with the assurance that it would nevertheless be a great good to the Island, because it would be the means of fostering a superior breed of cattle in the country. It is objected, I believe, that the advantage is not so wide-spread, because all farmers are not rich enough to purchase the imported stock; but, sir, if one farmer is better able to purchase such stock than his neighbour, still they will participate in his advantages, and improve their own stock. It is a great pity that this House was not in a position to continue the Model Farm.

Mr. MACINTOSH.—It has been insinuated that I am opposed to the advancement of agriculture; but it is a mistake. I would go as far as any hon. member to support it; but, sir, these small societies are inimical to its advancement. Besides, experience will show us that they cannot exist—that after a short time they fall through. It must not, therefore, be supposed that I am against a grant for a society in Princetown or any other town; but because I think they will do harm to the Central Society.

The question was then put on Mr. Mooney's amendment, when the petition was rejected on the following vote:—
Ayes—Hons. Col. Secretary, Col. Treasurer, Mooney, Wightman, Messrs. Pope, H. Haviland, McDonald, Dingwell, Munro, Perry, McGill, Laird, Cooper and MacIntosh—14.
Nays—Hons. T. H. Haviland, Longworth, Montgomery, Messrs. Clark, Muirhead and Munro—6.

The petition of Lewis Muttart and others, contractors for conveying the winter mails between this Island and Cape Tormentine, was then taken up.

Mr. MURHEAD said, that although it was usual for the Government to find or provide boats for the purpose of conveying the winter mails across the Straits of Northumberland; yet, in the present case, as the boats so provided did not turn out well, the contractors, he thought, were justified in asking compensation for the boats provided by them. He believed that a few years ago the Government granted a sum of £60 for the purpose of building boats; but when the wear and tear was considered—when it was known that some of them proved defective, he thought no objection could be made to giving them a small appropriation, and moved that the petition be referred to supply.

Hon. Mr. MONTGOMERY did not know whether the grant was called for or not, although he did not much object

to it; but, when it was considered that large sums had been paid recently for ice boats, he did not know whether the House was justified in granting such an appropriation without enquiring well into the justness of the claims of the petitioners. He would ask what became of the old boats? He always supported grants to former mail carriers, and he would support the prayer of the present one, because he considered that the mail carriers had a very arduous duty to perform, and ought to be well paid for it.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY said, it was true that large sums had recently been appropriated for mail boats; but it should be considered that accidents will often occur, besides, in the present case, some of the boats provided were considered too small, and were consequently laid aside. Mr. Owen then built a boat, which, it was thought, would remedy many of the defects in the others; but, upon trial, it was found to be too heavy. It was then proposed to have a zinc boat made, that would combine capacity with lightness and strength. The boat when completed crossed once, and then the weather was favorable, but was found not to be suitable at all times for the purpose, and they laid her up. They then set to work and built one, which, according to their experience, was best calculated for the purpose—of 15 feet keel, and 5 feet across the beam. This latter one was found more suitable. But the subject of providing the best possible boat, combining all the qualities requisite for crossing the Straits in winter, was taken up by other individuals, and models for new boats were submitted by Mr. Russell and Mr. Coker, agents for mercantile establishments in England. The Government agreed to try the experiment, and Mr. Davies was instructed to visit the place of crossing, and report; but he did not approve of all the models. However, the three gentlemen above named agreed upon a plan for the construction of the boats, and found it very suitable, and three boats were accordingly built, at a great expense, by the present contractors. Now, the question was, whether the contractors should be paid for the three new boats or for one? He thought that if the House paid them for one boat, they would be satisfied.

Mr. LAIRD.—If the country went to the expense of building the boats, he would ask why they did not see those which were not used?

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN thought it was rather unreasonable that the contractors should ask for money for building boats, when they engaged by their contract to supply them. It was well known that the Government from time to time gave large sums of money for the construction of winter mail boats, and that very lately too. He did not deny but that they ought to encourage such a branch of the public service, attended as it was by such arduous and dangerous contingencies; but, since so much has been already given, he would not go for any further grant. The contractors when they put in their tender did so with their eyes open, and they should stand by its provisions. But the fact was, that the boats built were not approved of, being too small or defective in other respects, excepting those built recently. If, then, any money were given, it should be to the parties who built them.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY said, that such was the design, and he thought the parties well deserved some appreciation, for they were faithful and vigilant in the discharge of their duty, which was not the most attractive he should judge, for he never crossed the Straits himself. They had four boats now in good order; but they could not last long, and something should be done to remunerate them for the excessive wear and tear, occasioned by the difficulties they had to anticipate in crossing the Straits. In fact, he always considered the sum they received for their services too small.

Mr. COOPER thought there must be something deficient either in the contractors or the terms of the contract; for there was hardly a session but they were petitioning the House for something additional. It was true they made the bargain, and it was nothing but right that they should abide by its specifications; but if the amount they received was not enough, the contract ought to be subject to certain contingencies, and then there would be no need of incessantly petitioning the House for remuneration for extra services or extra work.

Mr. POPE said it was true that the carriers were supposed by their contract to find their own boats. This they had done; and more than that, for they had now several more than were required for the purpose of carrying the mails. They have, so far, well and faithfully done their work, and I do contend, neither the present nor any former carriers were properly remunerated for that service. I have many times crossed in the ice boat, and well know the very great hardships and sufferings often endured by the carriers; and when we consider the amount of life and property entrusted to these carriers, the safety of which so much depends upon the efficiency of the men and boats, I don't think this House should object to grant a small sum, by way of compensating them for the very efficient boats now provided for that service.

Hon. Mr. MOONEY would be loath to oppose any grant towards the conveyance of the mails between this and the neighboring Colonies; but the thing was, were the Government to furnish the ice boats or were they not? If they were, why not do so, without further talk? If they were not, and it was the duty of the mail carriers to find the boats, why let them furnish such boats and not come there bothering the House with their petitions. The term of their contract would soon expire, and they could compete for it again if they liked, but leave it subject to certain contingencies, as his hon. friend Mr. Cooper said.

Hon. Mr. LONGWORTH thought that in future it would be best to make an arrangement with the parties contracting as to how they should be remunerated for building extra boats, and it would settle the thing forever; but, under the present circumstances, he thought the carriers were not well enough paid for the services they perform. Their petition ought to be entertained, and he would vote for having it go to supply.

Mr. YEO said he did not consider it a fair way to do business, to make a bargain, and then want more than was bargained for. If the parties entered into a contract, with a clear conception of what they were doing, they should abide by such agreement. If they had met with an accident, and lost one or two boats, he would sympathize with them; but it was no such thing—they built new boats, which it was doubtful if they were required, and then wanted the Government to pay for them. He would not support such a petition.

Mr. MURHEAD said they were not obliged to have so many boats; but it was better to have a few spare ones, in case of accident.

Mr. CLARK said he was opposed to giving the contract for the conveyance of the winter mails across the straits up to competition. A fair remuneration should be fixed upon, and then let whatever party that was in power give it to whom they pleased. But as the House had heretofore let it to tender, and as it had been proved that the contractors were not sufficiently remunerated, he thought something might, with propriety, be now given.

Mr. LAIRD did not think the method of giving the contract to competition an unfair one. He thought it paid the contractors well, and he did not see why they should be found in boats any